

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4175
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USDEL MBFR VIENNA IMMEDIATE
USNMR SHAPE BE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 NATO 05277

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO
SUBJECT: MBFR: UK PAPER ON DATA DISAGGREGATION

REF: (A) NATO 3477 (DTG 171506Z MAY 77), (B) NATO 3989
(DTG 242009Z MAY 77)

1. THIS MESSAGE TRANSMITS THE TEXT OF THE UK PAPER ON
THE DATA DISCUSSION CIRCULATED IN SPC ON JUNE 13. THIS
PAPER WAS ALSO PRESENTED TO RUTH IN BONN ON JUNE 13 BY
FCO MBFR DIRECTOR ROLAND SMITH.

2. WE DO NOT TRANSMIT THE TWO ANNEXES OF THE UK PAPER.
ANNEX I IS IDENTICAL WITH THE TABLES ON GROUND MANPOWER IN
PARA 3, REF A. ANNEX II IS IDENTICAL WITH THE TABLES
ON AIR MANPOWER IN REF B, EXCEPT THAT FIGURE FOR SOVIETS
IN OPERATIONAL FLYING UNITS BECOMES 42,000 INSTEAD OF
41,000, THE SUB-TOTAL FOR EASTERN PERSONNEL IN SUCH UNITS

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AS WELL AS THE GROUND TOTAL ARE SIMILARLY INCREASED BY
1000.

3. BEGIN TEXT:
UNITED KINGDOM COMMENTS ON THE DATA DISCUSSION

1. IN ITS APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF HOW TO PURSUE THE DATA

DISCUSSION, THE UK IS GUIDED BY THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS OF PRINCIPLE:

A) FOR A WORKABLE MBFR AGREEMENT, WE NEED TO KNOW BOTH WHAT FORCES ARE BEING REDUCED AND WHAT WILL BE THE RESIDUAL FORCE LEVELS AFTER THE COMPLETION OF REDUCTIONS:

B) IT FOLLOWS THAT SO LONG AS THE ALLIES CONTINUE TO BE INTERESTED IN REACHING AN MBFR AGREEMENT, THEY MUST ALSO BE INTERESTED IN THE EFFECTIVE PROSECUTION OF THE DATA DISCUSSION:

C) THEREFORE, IF THE ALLIES FAIL TO PURSUE THE DATA DISCUSSION, THIS WILL BE INTERPRETED BOTH BY THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES AND BY PUBLIC OPINION AS A SIGN THAT THE WEST IS NO LONGER INTERESTED IN AN MBFR AGREEMENT:

D) THE DATA DISCUSSION CAN BE PURSUED ONLY ON A BASIS THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES. CLEARLY THIS MEANS THAT IT MUST NOT BE PURSUED IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO PREJUDICE THE WESTERN NEGOTIATING POSITION. BUT IT ALSO MEANS THAT THE DISCUSSION CANNOT BE PURSUED IN A MANNER WHICH COULD BE CLAIMED BY THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES TO PREJUDICE THEIR NEGOTIATING POSITION. ANY BREAKDOWN SHOULD THEREFORE BE NEUTRAL.

2. AT PRESENT, PROGRESS IN THE DATA DISCUSSION IS EFFECTIVELY BEING BLOCKED BY THE NATO PARTICIPANTS. IN THE LIGHT OF THE CONSIDERATIONS SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH L ABOVE, IT SEEMS
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TO THE UK TO BE OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE THAT THE ALLIES SHOULD SEARCH DILIGENTLY FOR A WAY ROUND THE PRESENT IMPASSE. WE WELCOME THE GERMAN WORKING PAPER DATED 3 JUNE AS A CONTRIBUTION TO THIS SEARCH.

3. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE GERMAN PAPER AS IT STANDS CAN OFFER A WAY FORWARD. IT SEEMS TO US THAT THE PROPOSAL WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE REJECTED BY THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES. MOREOVER, WE BELIEVE THAT FOR THE WEST TO PRESENT THIS PROPOSAL AND HAVE IT REJECTED BY THE EAST WOULD IN ITSELF BE EXTREMELY DAMAGING TO THE WEST. HIGHLIGHTING THE WEST'S AVERSION TO NATIONAL TOTALS WILL PREVENT THE DATA DISCUSSION FROM ADVANCING BEYOND THE ISSUE OF WHETHER OR NOT NATIONAL TOTALS SHOULD BE TABLED, RATHER THAN FOCUSING IT ON THE ISSUE OF WHETHER OR NOT THE DISCUSSION SHOULD GO FURTHER THAN NATIONAL TOTALS.

4. THE FACT THAT THE NATIONALITY OF FRONT-LINE FORCES BUT

NOT OF RESIDUAL FORCES WOULD BE GIVEN WOULD LEAD TO EASTERN QUESTIONS WHICH WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR ALLIED NEGOTIATORS TO DISGUISE THEIR DISLIKE OF FIGURES FROM WHICH AGGREGATE NATIONAL TOTALS COULD BE DERIVED. THIS WOULD INFUSE THE ENTIRE DATA DISCUSSION WITH SUCH SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE GENERAL NEGOTIATING POSITION OF EACH SIDE AS TO OBLIGE THEM TO CONSIDER EACH MOVE FROM THE PARTICULAR POINT OF VIEW OF POSSIBLE PREJUDICE TO ALL ASPECTS OF THEIR POSITION (E.G., WITHDRAWAL BY UNITS, COLLECTIVITY, ETC.). NO EFFECTIVE DATA DISCUSSION WOULD BE POSSIBLE UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.

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5. THE PRACTICAL RESULT WOULD BE TO BRING THE DATA DISCUSSION TO A HALT, LEAVING THE INITIATIVE WITH THE EAST AND LEAVING THE EAST'S DATA WITHOUT EFFECTIVE CHALLENGE. THE WESTERN POSITION WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO DEFEND BOTH IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AND TO PUBLIC OPINION. UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, THE WEST (IF IT STILL WISHED TO PURSUE AN MBFR AGREEMENT) WOULD BE FACED WITH CHOOSING BETWEEN ACCEPTING EASTERN DATA, ATTEMPTING TO FIND A SOLUTION THAT BYPASSED THE NEED FOR ANY AGREEMENT ON DATA, OR RECONSIDERING ITS OPPOSITION TO THE TABLING OF NATIONAL TOTALS UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WOULD MAKE ANY CHANGE FAR MORE DIFFICULT.

THUS IN OUR VIEW, IF THE GERMAN PROPOSAL WERE PUT FORWARD AND REJECTED BY THE EAST, THE RESULTANT DAMAGE TO THE WESTERN NEGOTIATING POSITION WOULD BE GREATER THAN ANY POSSIBLE PREJUDICE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF COLLECTIVITY WHICH MIGHT BE CREATED BY THE TABLING OF FIGURES FROM WHICH NATIONAL TOTALS WOULD BE DERIVED.

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6. EVEN SUPPOSING THAT THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES WERE TO ACCEPT THE PRESENT GERMAN PROPOSAL, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE WEST WOULD BE ENABLED TO IDENTIFY SATISFACTORILY WHERE THE DISCREPANCIES LIE BETWEEN THE DATA ALREADY TABLED BY THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES AND NATO'S OWN ESTIMATES - WHICH IS THE IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE OF THE DATA DISCUSSION. IT IS HIGHLY LIKELY THAT THE BULK OF THE DISCREPANCY LIES IN RESIDUAL EASTERN MANPOWER RATHER THAN IN MAJOR COMBAT FORMATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

A) EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES HAVE INDICATED INFORMALLY THAT THE BULK OF THE DISCREPANCY IS IN THE NON-SOVIET FORCES, A SIZEABLE PROPORTION OF WHICH - MUCH MORE THAN SOVIET - CONSISTS OF RESIDUAL COMPONENTS:

B) IT IS IN THESE RESIDUAL CATEGORIES THAT MOST OF THE PERSONNEL ARE TO BE FOUND WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN EXCLUDED FROM THE COUNT ACCORDING TO THE COUNTING RULES PROPOSED BY THE WARSAW PACT REPRESENTATIVES IN THE SPRING OF 1976:

C) THE RESIDUAL COMPONENTS CONSTITUTE THE LESS VISIBLE ELEMENTS OF THE EASTERN FORCES. IF THE EAST HAS DELIBERATELY EXCLUDED MILITARY PERSONNEL FROM ITS OVERALL FIGURES (AS WE BELIEVE IS POSSIBLE) IT IS LIKELY THAT THE EAST PERCEIVED THIS CATEGORY AS OFFERING THE BEST PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESSFULLY CONCEALING THE FACT THAT EXCLUSION HAD BEEN MADE.

7. IN THE LIGHT OF THESE OBJECTIONS, THE UK HAS CONSIDERED WHAT MODIFICATIONS WOULD BE NEEDED TO THE GERMAN PROPOSAL TO INCREASE ITS VALUE TO THE ALLIES AND SIMULTANEOUSLY TO INCREASE THE CHANCES OF ITS BEING NEGOTIABLE WITH THE EAST. IT SEEMS TO THE UK THAT THE PRINCIPAL MODIFICATION REQUIRED WOULD BE THE NATIONAL BREAKDOWN OF RESIDUAL PERSONNEL. THIS WOULD ENABLE NATIONAL FORCE TOTALS TO BE CALCULATED INDIRECTLY FROM THE DATA TABLED. THIS SEEMS TO

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US TO BE AN ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENT BOTH IN ORDER FOR THE ALLIES TO IDENTIFY WHERE THE DISCREPANCIES LIE AND FOR THE EAST TO BE PERSUADED THAT THE DATA DISCUSSION IS NOT BEING PURSUED IN A PREJUDICIAL MANNER. IF THIS MODIFICATION CAN BE AGREED, WE WOULD BE WILLING TO AGREE TO THE USE BY ALLIED NEGOTIATORS OF ARGUMENTS BROADLY ON THE LINES OF THOSE CONTAINED IN PARAGRAPHS 6 AND 7 OF THE GERMAN PAPER SHOULD THE EAST ATTEMPT OPENLY TO INTRODUCE NATIONAL FIGURES ARRIVED AT BY MEANS OF ADDITION.

8. SECOND, IT SEEMS TO US THAT THE ALLIES SHOULD OFFER TO BREAK DOWN THE DATA FOR AIR FORCES SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THAT FOR GROUND FORCES. HOWEVER, WE WOULD NOT OBJECT TO THE ALLIES FIRST PROPOSING TO THE EAST THAT THE BREAKDOWN FOR AIR FORCES SHOULD NOT BE UNDERTAKEN UNTIL DISCUSSION OF GROUND FORCES WAS COMPLETE (AS PROPOSED IN PARAGRAPH 10 OF THE GERMAN PAPER) PROVIDED THAT IT WERE UNDERSTOOD WITHIN THE ALLIANCE THAT, IF NECESSARY, THE ALLIES COULD AGREE TO SIMULTANEOUS BREAKDOWN.

9. THIRD, IT SEEMS TO US MISTAKEN TO PROPOSE AN IMMEDIATE BREAKDOWN TO DIVISIONAL LEVEL. IN THE UK VIEW, IT WOULD BE MORE ORDERLY AND LOGICAL TO PROCEED STEP BY STEP, OFFERING FIRST A BREAKDOWN TO CORPS/ARMY LEVEL. IF AND WHEN THIS DATA HAD BEEN EXCHANGED, THE ALLIANCE MIGHT THEN PROPOSE FURTHER EXCHANGES GOING DOWN TO DIVISIONAL LEVEL.

10. THE UK HAS PREPARED ILLUSTRATIVE LISTS OF THE DATA WHICH MIGHT BE TABLED BY THE TWO SIDES ON THIS BASIS. THESE LISTS ARE PUT FORWARD FOR CONSIDERATION: THE DETAILS ARE, OF

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COURSE, OPEN TO MODIFICATION. THE LISTS ARE BASED ON
MCM(86)76 AND AC/276/D(76)6.

11. THE DATA FOR GROUND FORCES IS BROKEN DOWN INTO FIELD
CORPS/ARMIES (AND THE CANADIAN BRIGADE) AND "OTHER ACTIVE
DUTY PERSONNEL IN THE AREA". AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE DIF-
FERENT ORGANISATION OF FORCES BETWEEN EAST AND WEST, THE
WARSAW PACT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO GIVE RATHER MORE DETAIL
ON ITS FIELD UNITS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE TABLING OF
NATIONAL TOTALS WOULD HAVE REQUIRED THE WEST TO TABLE
SLMOST TWICE THE NUMBER OF DATA ELEMENTS TABLED BY THE
EAST. THE BREAKDOWN PROPOSED INVOLVES THE RELEASE BY EACH
SIDE OF 16 ITEMS OF DATA, AND THIS COULD BE PRE-
SENTED AS AN EVEN-HANDED EXCHANGE.

12. THE BREAKDOWN OF AIR FORCES IS DESIGNED TO FOLLOW AS
FAR AS POSSIBLE, THAT FOR GROUND FORCES. HOWEVER, THERE IS
NO FORMATION ANALOGOUS TO THE ARMY/CORPS GENERALLY APPLI-
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CABLE TO THE AIR FORCES OF ALL PARTICIPANTS. WE THEREFORE
PROPOSE A BREAKDOWN SPLIT BETWEEN PERSONNEL IN OPERA-
TIONAL UNITS AND THE REST, BUT WITHOUT TRYING FURTHER TO
BREAK DOWN THESE FIGURES INTO LARGE SCALE FORMATIONS.
UNDER "PERSONNEL IN OPERATIONAL FLYING UNITS", WE HAVE
INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

- HELICOPTER UNITS IN GROUND FORCE SUPPORT ROLE.
- HELICOPTER UNITS IN AIR FORCE SUPPORT ROLE.
- FIGHTER UNITS (TACTICAL).
- FIGHTER UNITS (AIR DEFENCE).
- FIGHTER BOMBER UNITS.
- RECCE UNITS.
- TRANSPORT UNITS.
- ECM/UTILITY UNITS.
- AIR DEFENCE RADAR UNITS.
- SURFACE TO AIR MISSILE UNITS.
- ALL OTHER PERSONNEL ARE INCLUDED IN THE RESIDUAL CATEGORY.

13. EVEN IF THE WARSAW PACT REFUSED TO EXCHANGE DATA ON
THIS BASIS, WE BELIEVE THAT THE PROPOSAL WOULD HELP NATO
TO REGAIN THE TACTICAL INITIATIVE. THE WEST COULD JUSTIFI-
ABLY CLAIM THAT THE PROPOSAL MET THE WARSAW PACT CONCERN
ABOUT THE NEED TO KNOW THE APPROXIMATE SIZE OF NATIONAL

FORCES WHILST ENSURING THAT THE DATA DISCUSSION DID NOT
STOP WITH THE TABLING OF NATIONAL DATA ALONE. THE WEST COULD
ALSO ARGUE THAT NATIONAL BREAKDOWNS WERE ONLY ONE ELEMENT
IN THE PICTURE AND THAT AS IMPORTANT (IF NOT MORE SO) WAS
THE DISTRIBUTION OF FORCES BETWEEN FRONT-LINE FIELD UNITS
AND OTHER FORCES. SUCH ARGUMENTS COULD ALSO BE USED EFFEC-
TIVELY TO DEFEND OUR PUBLIC POSITION IF THE NEED AROSE.
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